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November 27, 1981

Ms. Lillian Silberstein
Executive Director
The National Conference of
Christians and Jews, Inc.
777 North First Street, Suite 620
San Jose, CA 95112

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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Dear Ms. Silberstein:

I have been asked to reply to your letter of November 3 concerning the case of Raoul Wallenberg.

As you may know, the United States Government has been concerned over the fate of Raoul Wallenberg since the case first came to light at the end of World War II. We have taken every appropriate opportunity to ask Soviet authorities for a clarification on the Wallenberg case. The Soviet authorities have persisted in maintaining that Wallenberg died in 1947 but have provided no further details. When we received reports which indicated the possibility that Wallenberg might still be alive, we raised the matter with the Soviets on numerous occasions throughout 1979. They finally answered, formally and in writing, in February of 1980, stating that Wallenberg had died in July of 1947. They also informed the Swedish Government of this finding and indicated that they would have no further information on Wallenberg in the future.

The Wallenberg case remains a matter of concern for the United States Government, and we have continued our efforts to gain information regarding his fate. In December, 1980, at the Madrid CSCE Review Conference, the United States delegation voiced its support for the position of the Government of Sweden when the Swedish delegation urged renewed efforts to resolve the Wallenberg case. In addition, representatives from the American Embassy in Stockholm attended sessions of the hearing on the Wallenberg case held in Stockholm in January of this year. On April 10, Ambassador Max Kampelman, speaking in Madrid at a CSCE plenary session, stated that the Wallenberg case was one that "will not go away." Ambassador Kampelman noted that the refusal of the Soviets "to appreciate the human factor which is symbolized by the Wallenberg case is stimulating even further interest." He stated that "the tragic mystery of Raoul Wallenberg is unnecessarily becoming a divisive international issue."

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Most recently, the President signed into law a bill, passed overwhelmingly by both houses of Congress, making Raoul Wallenberg an honorary U.S. citizen. Although making Raoul Wallenberg an honorary American does not confer any new legal right on the United States under international law, honoring Wallenberg in this fashion does make clear to the Soviets the extreme seriousness with which the American Government and people view Soviet conduct in the Wallenberg case. Wallenberg's actions during World War II were those of a humanitarian of extraordinary courage. By making him an honorary American citizen, we have made the Soviets aware of our continued dedication to the effort to resolve the mystery of Wallenberg's fate.

Let me assure you that the Department of State will continue to express concern over the Wallenberg case at every appropriate opportunity. Let me also assure you that we intend to cooperate with the Government of Sweden and all other interested parties in a persistent effort to obtain information that will clarify the fate of this brave man.

Sincerely,

James F. Schumaker
Bilateral Relations
Office of Soviet Union Affairs

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